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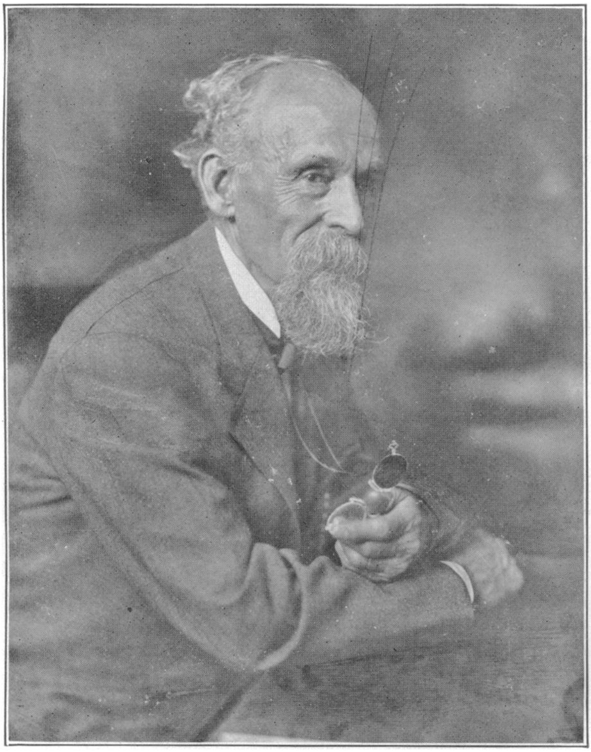

JOHN ALFRED BRASHEAR

Distinguished as a maker of astronomical and physical instruments and an astronomer, a leader in the scientific, educational and civic life of Pittsburgh, who died on April 9, in his eightieth year.

A. Fries, has made many important contributions to the arts of peace.

The newly constituted Leather Section of the society developed improved processes in the tanning of hides for shoes and for industrial purposes which are likely to greatly increase the efficiency and speed of tanning processes and possibly contribute to a decrease in the prices of footgear. The section devoted to rubber considered a new method of testing that elastic substance with the microscope which is considered revolutionary.

American dyes are able to hold their own not only for the tinting of fabrics but also for scientific and medical purposes, as demonstrated by important papers read before the dye division. A new note appeared in the proposal to derive from corn cobs furfural, which may be used as a base from which to draw dyes, just as certain coal tar products are employed. Thus, furfural green, a favorite tint, may eventually be derived from the refuse of native maize.

MEAT AND MILK IN THE FOOD SUPPLY

THE committee on food and nutrition of the National Research Council has issued a report on meat and milk in the food supply of the nation, which is summarized in a press bulletin of the council.

Dr. Armsby, probably the leading American expert on animal nutrition, has estimated that of the energy of grain used in feeding the animal there is recovered for human consumption about 18 per cent. in milk, and only about 3½ per cent. in beef. In an official Report on the Food Supply of the United Kingdom, it is estimated that the production of 100 calories of human food in the form of milk from a good cow, requires the consumption of animal feed by the cow of 2.9 pounds starch equivalent; 100 calories milk from a poor cow is estimated to require the consumption of 4.7 pounds; while 100 calories of beef from a steer 2½ years old, is estimated to require the consumption of 9 pounds of starch equivalent in food.

Stated in terms comparable with those used by Dr. Armsby, this would mean that the good milk cow returns 20 per cent. of the energy value of what she consumes, the poor milk cow 12 per cent., and the good beef steer only 6 per cent. Although this estimate is more favorable to the beef steer than is that of Dr. Armsby, yet even by this estimate it will be seen that the poor cow is twice as efficient, and the good milk cow more than three times as efficient as the beef steer in the conservation of energy in the food supply.

Considering the whole length of life of the animal, Professor Wood, the leading English agricultural expert, estimates that the cow returns in milk, veal and beef, $1/12$ as much as she has consumed, while the beef steer returns only $1/64$. In other words, the cow is five times as efficient as the beef steer as a food producer when the whole life cycle of the animal is considered.

Similarly it has been estimated by Cooper and Spillman (Farmers Bulletin, No. 877, 1917, U. S. Department of Agriculture) that the crops grown on a given area may be expected to yield from four to five times as much protein and energy for human consumption when fed to dairy cows as when used for beef production. As Professor Wood has very strikingly shown, the longer the time that the beef animals are fattened on grain, the less economical the process becomes.

But not only is the milk cow several times more efficient than the beef steer in the conservation of proteins, fats and carbohydrate for human consumption, but in the gathering and preparation of mineral elements and vitamines she contrasts even more favorably with the beef animal. It is largely because of its richness in calcium and in fat-soluble vitamine that milk is the most efficient nutritional supplement to bread or other grain products.

SCIENTIFIC ITEMS

We record with regret the death of George Egbert Fisher, professor of mathematics in the University of Pennsylvania; James Gayley, past president of the Institute of Mining Engineers; James Emerson Reynolds, formerly professor of chemistry at the University of Dublin; Charles Lapworth, for many years professor of geology and physiography in the University of Birmingham; Pier Andrea Saccardo, emeritus professor of botany in the University of Padua, and Woldemar Voigt, the mathematical physicist of the University of Göttingen.

At a meeting held in the rooms of the Royal Society, to consider the question of a memorial to the memory of Lord Rayleigh, it was agreed that a fund should be raised for the purpose of placing a memorial, preferably a window, in Westminster Abbey. A committee was appointed to consider details and the further question of raising a fund in memory of Lord Rayleigh, to be used for the promotion of research in some branch of science in which he was specially interested.—Dr. Harvey Cushing, Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Boston, has been requested by